

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-4, 6, 10-12, 17, 21, 22 and 26 are amended and claim 27 is newly added. Claims 1-27 are pending upon entry of this amendment. Changes to the claims are provided in the below listing of the claims.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A process for wet-chemical treatment of one side of a silicon wafer ~~wafers~~ using a liquid bath, during which treatment the silicon wafer ~~wafers~~ lays on conveyor means and the entire surface of the underside to be treated is conveyed through or over liquid located in the liquid bath, wherein the conveyor means are positioned within the liquid bath, further wherein the top side ~~sides~~ of the wafer ~~wafers~~ which is ~~are~~ not to be treated is ~~are~~ always positioned above the liquid.

2. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the silicon wafer is ~~wafers are~~ processed continuously in a once-through process.

3. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that the underside ~~undersides~~ of the silicon wafer is ~~wafers are~~ lowered into the liquid bath.

4. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that as part of a production line the silicon wafer is ~~wafers are~~ conveyed horizontally through the treatment liquid located in the liquid bath.

5. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the liquid bath used is a tank whose peripheral edge is lower than the level of the treatment liquid.

6. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the edges of the silicon ~~wafer~~ wafers are also treated.

7. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the treatment is an etching step and is carried out in a liquid composition which contains NaOH, KOH, HF, HNO₃, HF with O₃, and/or HF with oxidizing agent.

8. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that the oxidizing agent is an oxidizing acid.

9. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that the liquid composition contains at least one additive for binding the gases formed during the etching.

10. (Currently amended) A process for wet-chemical treatment of one side of a silicon ~~wafer~~ wafers using a liquid bath, during which treatment the ~~wafer~~ lays ~~wafers~~ lay on conveyor means and ~~are~~ is conveyed with the underside to be treated through or over liquid located in the liquid bath, wherein the level of the liquid being contacted by the underside is maintained above the level of the bath surface not being contacted by the underside, further wherein the top ~~side~~ sides of the ~~wafer~~ wafers which ~~is~~ are not to be treated ~~is~~ are always positioned above the level of the liquid.

11. (Currently Amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the ~~underside~~ undersides of the silicon ~~wafer~~ is ~~wafers~~ are lowered into the liquid bath over the production line.

12. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the silicon ~~wafer~~ is ~~wafers~~ are conveyed horizontally through the treatment liquid located in the liquid bath over a production line.

13. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 12, characterized in that the liquid bath used is a tank whose peripheral edge is lower than the level of treatment liquid.

14. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the conveyor means are provided in the form of belts or conveyor rolls.

15. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 14, characterized in that the conveyor rolls are in each case arranged on axle elements.

16. (Original) The process as claimed in claim 15, characterized in that each axle element is encapsulated in a fluid-tight manner with respect to the treatment liquid.

17. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the edges of the silicon wafer ~~wafers~~ are also treated.

18. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that the liquid composition contains at least one additive for binding the gases formed during the etching.

19. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the conveyor means are provided in the form of belts or conveyor rolls.

20. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the treatment is an etching, coating or cleaning step.

21. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the top side ~~sides~~ of the wafer ~~is wafers~~ are not protected during treatment.

22. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the silicon wafer is ~~wafers are~~ processed continuously in a once-through process.

23. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the treatment is an etching, coating or cleaning step.

24. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 23, characterized in that the etching liquid is carried out in a liquid composition which contains NaOH, KOH, HF, HNO₃, HF with O₃, and/or HF with oxidizing agent.

25. (Previously presented) The process as claimed in claim 24, characterized in that the oxidizing agent is an oxidizing acid.

26. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, characterized in that the top side ~~sides~~ of the wafer is ~~wafers are~~ not protected during treatment.

27. (New) A process for wet-chemical treatment of electrically conductive edges of a silicon wafer using a liquid bath, during which treatment the silicon wafer lays on conveyor means, wherein the underside and electrically conductive edges to be treated are conveyed through or over etching liquid located in the liquid bath to remove conductivity from the edges, further wherein the conveyor means are positioned within the liquid bath, further wherein an electrically conductive top side of the wafer which is not to be treated is always positioned above the liquid.